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ABSTRACT

For young people, service to others can develop important habits and skills that help them become an asset to their neighborhoods. This guide was created to help adults teachers, parents, after-school providers, and members of community-based organizations to find and create opportunities for young people to answer President George W. Bush's call for all U.S. people to dedicate at least two years of their lives in service to their communities, their country, or the world. The guide contains nine sections: (1) "Letter from the President of the United States of America"; (2) "Letter from Supporting Organizations"; (3) "Table of Contents"; (4) "Introduction"; (5) "Fostering a Culture of Service, Citizenship, and Responsibility" (President's Call to Service; USA Initiative; Examples of Student Projects Already Part of the USA Initiative); (6) "Bringing Service to the Classroom" (Developing Habits of Service; Hallmarks of Effective Service Programs; Ten Steps for Bringing Service to Your Classrooms); (7) "About Service-Learning" (What Is Service-Learning?; Benefits of Student Service and Service-Learning; Examples of Service-Learning in Action); (8) "Tools and Resources" (In Schools; Outside the Classroom; Recognition Programs); and (9) "Conclusion." (BT)

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Corporation for National and Community Service, Washington, DC.
U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC
Points of Light Foundation, Washington, DC.
USA Freedom Corps, Washington, DC.
Volunteer Center National Network.

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Students in Service to America

A GUIDEBOOK FOR ENGAGING AMERICA'S STUDENTS IN A LIFELONG HABIT OF SERVICE

ser·vice\'sər-vəs*n*:
the act of serving: as a helpful
act: a good turn.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 24, 2002

My Fellow Americans:

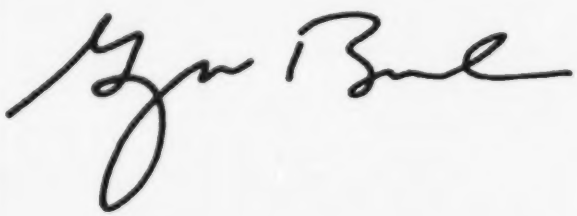
Millions of Americans volunteer each year to help a neighbor in need. By their service, they help strengthen our country. To build on their kindness and compassion and to help build a culture of responsibility, in January I called on all Americans to dedicate at least two years of their lives to serve others. I was speaking to Americans of all ages – to baby boomers entering retirement, to seniors, to professionals in the middle of their careers, to families, and particularly, to our young people.

Like those who came before them, America's young people have time and talents that they can share with those in need. In the process of serving others, they will be helping communities, developing their personal characters, and learning about our civic traditions and institutions.

As part of the work of the USA Freedom Corps, the U.S. Department of Education and the Corporation for National and Community Service have created a guide that educators, community groups, and others can use to offer America's students the opportunity to serve something larger than themselves. They have also joined with the Points of Light Foundation to help America's students, America's schools, and America's community-based organizations to answer the call to service.

America's young people will be a powerful force in our effort to overcome evil with good. I look forward to the results their service will have in America's communities and in their development as citizens of the greatest democracy on earth.

May God bless you and may God continue to bless America.



August, 2002

Dear Friend:

In order to foster a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility in America's communities, President Bush has called on all Americans to dedicate at least two years of their lives—the equivalent of 4,000 hours—in service to their communities, our country, or the world. The challenge the President issued is significant—research shows that community involvement and volunteer service in the United States have been steadily declining over the past three decades. Research also shows that two of the main reasons individuals give for not volunteering are that they were never asked or that they did not know where to start.

Young people's service can be an asset to their neighborhoods. Service to others can also develop important habits and skills. This document has been created to help adults—teachers, parents, after-school providers, and members of community-based organizations—to find and create opportunities for young people to answer the President's Call to Service.

As part of the USA Freedom Corps initiative, the U.S. Department of Education and the Corporation for National and Community Service worked with the Points of Light Foundation and the Volunteer Center National Network to create this guide and the accompanying CD-ROM. Developing a lifelong habit of service among America's young people will require that individuals and organizations work together to achieve that important goal.

The mission of the U.S. Department of Education is to ensure equal access to education and promote educational excellence throughout the Nation. The Corporation for National and Community Service is an independent federal corporation whose mission is to provide opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to engage in service that addresses the Nation's educational, public safety, environmental, and other human needs. The Points of Light Foundation and the Volunteer Center National Network is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting volunteering. The resources of each of these three entities have been brought together in this document to provide support for your efforts to engage youth in service. Whether you are a teacher, a school principal, a service-learning coordinator, someone working in a nonprofit organization, or someone volunteering in a youth program, this guide can help you enhance service opportunities for the young people with whom you work.

Sincerely,

Leslie Lenkowsky
CEO
Corporation for National and Community Service

Rod Paige
U.S. Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education

Robert K. Goodwin
President and CEO
Points of Light Foundation

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Introduction

The creation of an informed citizenry, able to participate in our democratic institutions, has always been a primary goal of America's schools. Given the challenges we face as a Nation, educating our young people to be knowledgeable, skillful, and engaged citizens of a free society has never been more important.

Achieving that goal requires that our schools become centers of academic excellence. It also requires that they become places where our students can acquire the habits of civic participation, responsibility, and service that are essential to American democratic life. For this to occur, students must learn about our democratic institutions. They must also learn to see themselves as participants in our democracy. They need to be able to put their knowledge and ideas into practice by helping to solve real community problems alongside other community members.

"Education should prepare children for jobs, and it also should prepare our children for life. I join you in wanting our children to not only be rich in skills, but rich in ideals. Teaching character and citizenship to our children is a high calling . . . I'm grateful for your work."

President George W. Bush

Through high standards for student achievement, accountability for results, and enhanced local control, America's schools are helping our students develop essential skills and knowledge in reading, math and other academic subjects. American schools have also long encouraged students to participate in volunteer service in many forms—ranging from individual volunteer activities, to service projects organized by student groups or faculty members, to formal service projects that link to academic lessons.

In recent years, educators have become more conscious of the importance of these kinds of activities for both their students and the communities in which they live. Some school systems, in fact, have established volunteer service as a requirement for graduation. Others have tried to integrate community service more closely into their curricula, a practice known as "service-learning." Whatever the means used to foster it, service must be encouraged if we are to become the Nation of "citizens, not spectators" that President Bush has urged us to become.

Service can be undertaken by individuals or groups, in school or after school, and by younger and older students alike. This guide offers parents, teachers, and other adults who work with children resources for helping young people develop habits

of service. It does not mandate or prescribe a particular curriculum or lesson plan. It is being offered as a resource that educators in particular may find helpful if they choose to make an effort in their classrooms to help their students step forward to answer President Bush's Call to Service.

You will find additional resources on the CD-ROM that is enclosed with this guide, as well as online at www.usafreedomcorps.gov. These materials can help you plan student service opportunities and engage the young people with whom you work. Our hope is that by serving something greater than themselves, young people will learn about their rich democratic traditions as Americans, help meet vital community needs, and become responsible and engaged citizens.

Fostering a Culture of Service, Citizenship, and Responsibility

THE PRESIDENT'S CALL TO SERVICE

To harness the outpouring of civic pride that emerged after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and foster a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility in America, President Bush created the USA Freedom Corps. As part of that initiative, he called on all Americans to commit at least two years of their lives—the equivalent of 4,000 hours—to the service of others.

civ·ics \'siv-iks\ *n*:
the study of the rights and duties of citizens.

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While some Americans will respond to the President's Call to Service by signing up for the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, or other programs that enable them to commit a year or two to full-time service, most Americans will serve a few hours each week or month throughout their lives. A young person who participates in a well-designed service program in every grade of elementary and secondary school, for example, could accumulate approximately 800 hours by high school graduation. Most importantly, he or she will have acquired the habits and skills for a lifetime of volunteering.

THE USA INITIATIVE

A school or community organization may encourage service and service-learning for many reasons, including bringing students into closer contact with their community, meeting state or district requirements, improving students' commitment to their school, or as a strategy to increase civic engagement. Performing acts of service and kindness may also be a way of enabling people to respond positively to a crisis. The USA Initiative of the Points of Light Foundation and the Volunteer Center National Network offers schools, students and organizations the opportunity to begin or continue a service or service-learning program in honor of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001.

The USA Act, now called the USA Initiative, was passed by Congress in 2001, and signed into law by President Bush. The Act calls for the creation of living memorials to those who lost their lives on September 11, while uniting Americans in service to their communities and to one another. Administered by the Points of Light Foundation and the Volunteer Center National Network, the USA Initiative offers Americans the opportunity to respond to the tragedy in a uniquely American way—by volunteering to rebuild and revitalize communities in memory of those who lost their lives on that day.

During the first part of the 2002-2003 school year, educators can seek to designate hands-on service projects with learning or curricular objectives as USA Initiative projects. The projects may be new or a continuation of past activities, and should involve direct service to the community. Examples of direct service activities include food drives for local food pantries, tutoring projects, park cleanups, community gardening, or playground building.

In order for a project to be designated a USA Initiative project, it must be registered with the Points of Light Foundation and the Volunteer Center National Network by March 1, 2003. Projects should be "largely completed" by May 3, 2003, meaning only a minor component should still be in progress on that date. For example, a house that is constructed but not painted by May 3 would be considered "largely completed." To register a project, visit the USA Initiative web site at www.usa.pointsoflight.org.

By linking your project or program with the USA Initiative, you may find access to new resources that will support your service program, such as connections to local Volunteer Centers and nonprofits in your area that can provide their expertise on working with community-based organizations and help you find partners for your project. By linking to a national initiative, you can also gain recognition for your program and create opportunities for civic learning.

USA FREEDOM CORPS

As a coordinating council housed at the White House and chaired by President George W. Bush, the USA Freedom Corps is working to strengthen our culture of service, citizenship and responsibility and help find opportunities for every American to start engaging in volunteer service.

Established in 2002, the USA Freedom Corps works with key service agencies in government, as well as organizations in the nonprofit and private sectors, to provide opportunities and incentives to serve others at home and abroad. The USA Freedom Corps has also built a comprehensive USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network, through which individuals can find service opportunities that match their interests and talents in their hometowns, across the country or around the world. The Network is available at the USA Freedom Corps web site: www.usafreedomcorps.gov.

EXAMPLES OF STUDENT PROJECTS ALREADY PART OF THE USA INITIATIVE

- One community organization is working with students from 10 regional schools to create a memorial to honor those lost on September 11. Students have designed a 15-foot sculpture that will be carved from the trunk of a felled cedar, with guidance from a woodworking teacher who is leading the carving effort. Its creators hope the sculpture will find a permanent home in their downtown area in time for a September 11 dedication.

- Journalism students at one high school are exploring the impact of September 11 by researching former high-school students who are members of the armed services. Students will publish biographies and pictures of these former students to bring attention to the service these men and women have performed. The students will improve their research, writing, and photography skills, while documenting local history and the impact of current events.

- On the anniversary of September 11, one volunteer resource center will initiate a recycling program in partnership with a local school. Students at the school will develop and staff a recycling project for the entire community. Research on the rebuilding efforts necessary to respond to tragedy will also be tied to awareness of the environment and the importance of involving the entire community in such issues. Through the project, students will apply planning and math skills and learn about the environment and the history of America's responses to crises.

Bringing Service to the Classroom

DEVELOPING HABITS OF SERVICE

Service is a habit, and like most habits, it is most effectively developed at an early age. Research shows, for example, that young people who were leaders in student government are more likely to be engaged in civic affairs as adults.

Service is also a way that young people can contribute to their community while at the same time receiving something in return. For example, older students who tutor younger ones not only benefit from the experience of helping younger students do better in school, but studies show they also improve their own academic skills.

Students are already developing the habit of service in many ways, including participation in the National Honor Society and National Junior Honor Society, the American Legion and Legion Auxiliary Boys and Girls State programs, the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Program, and 4-H Clubs.

A 1999 study of service-learning and community service in America's public schools conducted by the U.S. Department of Education found that 57 percent of all public schools organized community service activities for their students, while 32 percent specifically organized service-learning activities.

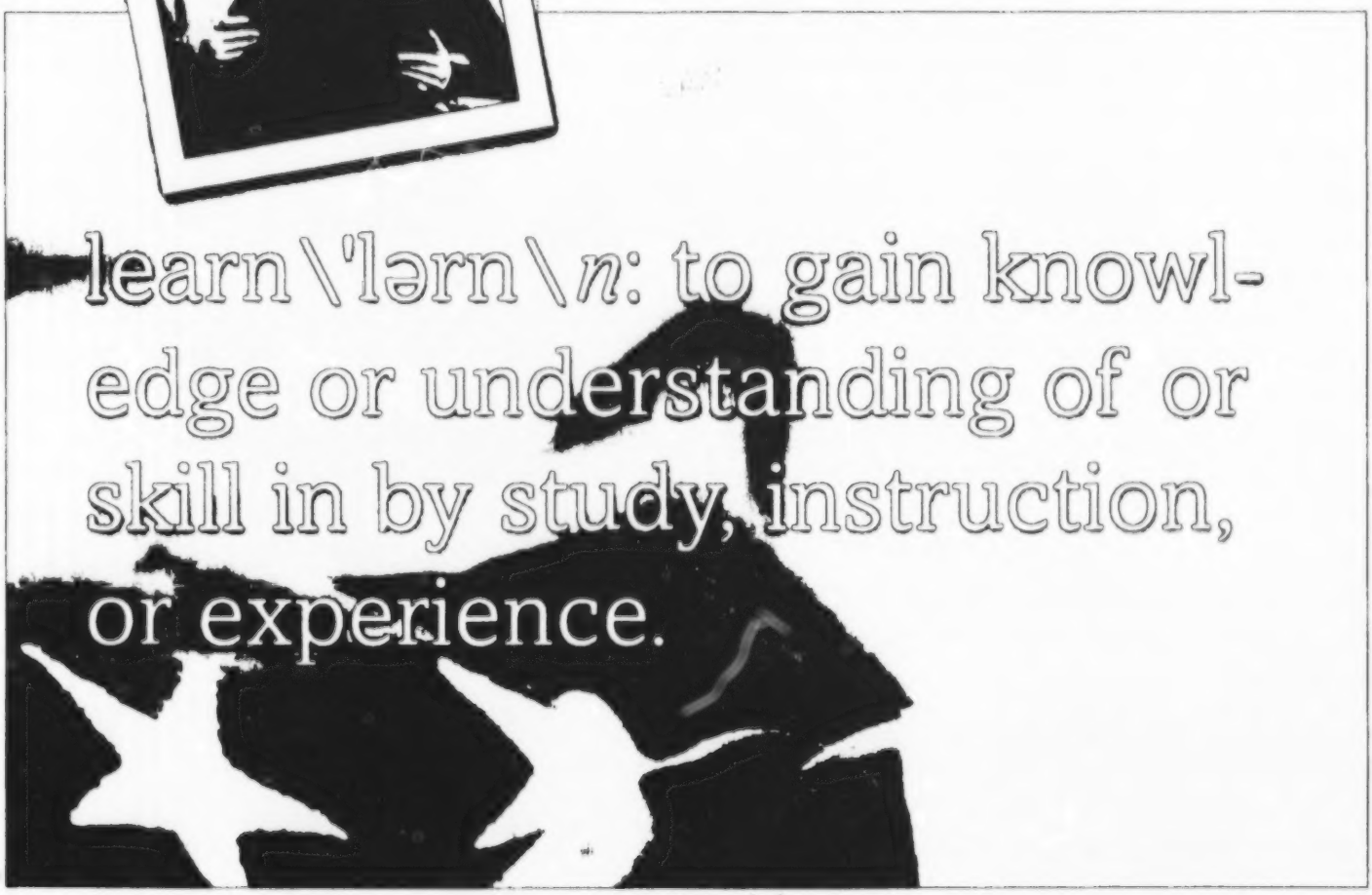
THE POINTS OF LIGHT FOUNDATION AND THE VOLUNTEER CENTER NATIONAL NETWORK

The Points of Light Foundation and the Volunteer Center National Network seek to engage more people, more effectively, in volunteer service to help solve serious social problems. The Foundation accomplishes its mission by raising public awareness about the impact of volunteering, building the knowledge and skills of volunteers and volunteer leaders, and providing local delivery systems to mobilize volunteers. Recognizing the power of service-learning to meet that mission, the Foundation serves as a Senior Program Advisor for the Learn and Serve America National Service-Learning Clearinghouse. In that role, and through other programs, the staff works to develop training and resources about youth leadership, service-learning partnerships, and community-based service-learning. Link: www.pointsoflight.org

Those numbers reflect an increase in school-organized service activities over the course of the 1990's. Yet according to another study, the majority of college-bound high school seniors devoted less than an hour per week to volunteer service, indicating service forms just a small part of the lives of young Americans. In addition, social trends show sharp declines in membership in groups such as the Kiwanis Clubs and Parent-Teacher Associations, which involve young people in service.

These are perhaps some of the reasons school-based service has grown in popularity. According to the same U.S. Department of Education survey cited above, in 1999 service-learning was offered by 25 percent of all public elementary schools, 38 percent of middle schools, and 46 percent of high schools. The survey results showed that service-learning is used in all regions of the country and in all types of communities—urban, suburban, and rural.

Service in schools will help to ensure that this habit of service is created in our Nation's youth—whether through general service projects such as food drives, visits to senior citizens, peer tutoring, or formal service-learning programs that link to curriculum.



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HALLMARKS OF EFFECTIVE SERVICE PROGRAMS

Service and service-learning can be used to teach any subject and meet a wide variety of community needs. However, to provide valuable service, build civic skills, and increase student achievement, project and program designers may wish to consider including some of the following practices, which program experience has shown to be effective:

- ⇢ Service activities should be of sustained or significant duration. Program experience suggests that a minimum of 40 hours over a school year is necessary to yield positive results for students and the community.
- ⇢ Teachers or after-school program coordinators or sponsors need to work with students in order to draw the connections between what the students are doing and what they should be learning. Even if service activities are conducted outside of class, it is important that the project have clear and specific learning objectives.
- ⇢ The service that students perform should have a strong connection to the curriculum they are studying or to their after-school activities.
- ⇢ The relationship between service and democratic practices, ideas, and history should be made explicit in order that students see service as a civic responsibility.
- ⇢ Project participants should be given time to reflect on their service. That may involve asking students to keep a journal, or having teachers and organizers lead discussions or coordinate activities that get participants to analyze and think critically about their service. These activities need to be planned, not left to chance.
- ⇢ Students should have a role not only in executing the service project, but also in making decisions about its development. Students should be involved in leadership roles in all phases of the project.
- ⇢ In order to ensure that service is really useful and strengthens community ties, strong partnerships with community groups based on mutually agreed upon goals, roles, and responsibilities are essential.

Overall, the most important feature of effective service and service-learning programs is that both learning and service are emphasized. For example, students in quality service-learning programs are graded on what they learn, just as they would be for any other class. But they are also expected to carry out service projects of genuine benefit to the community. Students volunteering outside of a course should also be encouraged to take on meaningful activities and, with the aid of teachers or community group leaders, find ways of reflecting seriously on them or communicating to others what they have learned.

For example, a social studies teacher in a community where historical monuments are in disrepair could develop a project in which students work with the local historical society to find ways to repair them. In the process, the students would research local history, create exhibits for the public, further their civic understanding, and even learn preservation techniques.

Similarly, a science teacher in an urban area with little access to fresh produce could teach students about botany, biology, and agricultural practices by having them build and maintain a community garden. The students might even set up a vegetable stand, where they could put the concepts they are learning in their math or economics classes into practice.

Or, a Spanish language teacher in an area with a growing Spanish-speaking population could develop a service-learning project to translate brochures and fliers put out by local social service groups or schools. This would not only give students an opportunity to hone their language skills, but also learn more about Hispanic culture.

Each of these projects could be done as part of a course or outside of class. The critical element is that they should combine worthwhile service with well-defined educational objectives if they are to be effective in developing the habits of citizenship and service.

TEN STEPS FOR BRINGING SERVICE TO YOUR CLASSROOM

The following steps will help you create an effective service project or service-learning program. While all these steps are useful to consider, you may not need to perform them all, or follow them in the order presented here. The planning and implementation of service and service-learning programs are dynamic processes, and projects vary greatly. Read through all the steps before undertaking your project, and remember to include participating youth in as many phases as possible.

Step 1: Assess the Needs and Resources of Your Community and School

In selecting a project, consult with community members, civic groups, businesses, government officials, school personnel, and students to determine both the needs of your community and the available resources, including partnership opportunities. Find out who else is doing (or has done) something similar.

Step 2: Form Community Partnerships

Most successful service projects require forming partnerships. You can build on existing relationships and connections, or you can develop new ones with potential partners identified in Step 1. Be realistic about your resources, needs, and limitations, and make sure that your goals are of mutual interest to all of your partners. Also be concrete about the roles and responsibilities of each partner organization.

Step 3: Set Specific Educational Goals and Curriculum

Determine what you expect the young people to learn. Even service and service-learning projects organized by community-based organizations or after-school programs should set specific educational goals. Establish what content objectives or standards will be addressed, and incorporate your service and learning objectives into lesson plans. Devise ways to measure and assess whether those goals are being met, including reflection and assessment activities. When evaluating student performance, assess their effort and mastery of the subject. Service outcomes may not be what you expect.

Step 4: Select a Project and Begin Preliminary Planning

Pick a project and determine how all partners can work together to achieve the desired goals. Try to determine your human, financial, physical, and intellectual needs and whether you need additional partners to provide the required resources. Be sure to identify people in your school or organization who can coordinate the project and maintain continuity from year to year.

Step 5: Plan Your Project in Detail

Set up a timeline, create a budget, and assign tasks. Think about how to include your partners in this process. As with any project, thorough planning, including the creation of schedules, benchmarks, budgets, evaluation and assessment tools, and documentation, can identify and correct many potential problems.

Step 6: Acquire Necessary Funding and Resources

If additional funds, goods, or services are needed, consider seeking assistance from local businesses, national corporations, parents, faith-based organizations, government programs (e.g., AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Learn and Serve America, your State Education Agency), civic groups, and other community organizations or sources of federal, state, and local funds.

Step 7: Implement and Manage Project

Put your plan into action. Continually assess your project to determine what is working and what could be improved. Involve project partners in evaluating and improving your project.

Step 8: Organize Reflection Activities

Make sure students are thinking about their service experience on a regular basis (e.g., through journals or classroom assignments) and organize activities that allow students to analyze their service and see how their ideas, knowledge and perceptions are changing. Use such reflections to help assess and improve the project. You may want to use the on-line or printable Record of Service found at www.usafreedomcorps.gov.

Step 9: Assess and Evaluate Your Service Program

Ensure that your evaluation assesses the outcomes of the service project for the youth, the community, and the organizations involved. Documentation and evaluation of the project will create a legacy for the individuals and the organizations who participated in and benefited from your service activities. It will also point the way to the next project for your classroom, and may foster activities in other classrooms.

Step 10: Celebrate Achievements

Everyone likes to be recognized for a job well done. Recognition of students can help build habits of service and lead to a lifetime of community involvement. Don't forget to recognize key community partners as well. Recognition may include: displays in school or online, celebratory events such as ribbon cuttings or groundbreakings, visits by local officials, and participation in national recognition programs, some of which are listed in the Tools and Resources section of this guide.

About Service-Learning

WHAT IS SERVICE-LEARNING?

In recent years, more and more schools and teachers have been expanding upon student service activities with service-learning programs that link student volunteer service activity directly to academic coursework.

According to the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, service-learning:

- ⇢ Is a method whereby students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of communities
- ⇢ Is coordinated with an elementary school, secondary school, institution of higher education, or community service program and the community
- ⇢ Helps foster civic responsibility
- ⇢ Is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students, or the education components of the community service program in which the participants are enrolled
- ⇢ Provides structured time for students or participants to reflect on the service experience

Service-learning aims to build knowledge, character, and civic skills in young people by combining service to the community with academic learning. By directly linking service to the academic curriculum, service-learning creates a place for service that is integrated into a school's core mission: education. Instead of becoming one more burden on the already busy lives of teachers, families, and students, service-learning strives to make their lives easier by combining academic instruction with civic involvement.

A good service-learning program reinforces specific educational objectives—such as developing students' presentation skills, teaching them how a bill becomes a law, or showing them how to translate a drawing from miniature to life-size—while also engaging students in meaningful and structured volunteering.

Likewise, an after-school or community-based program can be linked to classroom academic instruction when teachers collaborate with the organizations sponsoring the program. Over the last 10 years, community-based organizations that have long sponsored service programs, including the YMCA of the USA, Camp Fire USA, the United Cerebral Palsy Association, and the National 4-H Council, as well as newer organizations including the Points of Light Foundation and the Volunteer Center National Network, Youth Volunteer Corps of America, and America's Promise, have begun working with schools to support service-learning through their community programs. The goal of these partnerships is to provide an experience that enriches the classroom work of students, while also fostering civic responsibility and addressing real community needs.

CIVIC EDUCATION

Service can foster civic responsibility by giving young people responsibility for significant activities, encouraging interaction among people, and having students perform tasks that are important to community well-being. However, not all service and service-learning can be called civic education. In order for service to be an effective strategy for building civic engagement and participation in American democracy, civic and historical knowledge should be a part of the learning or training associated with the service the individuals perform. An effective civic engagement strategy might include three components:

1) Instruction in the fundamentals of democracy, including essential civic documents and history; civic and government processes; and instruction in civic skills, including responsibility, tolerance, public debate, making presentations, information-gathering, and analysis of current events

2) Meaningful community service activities

3) The effective linkage of the above through reflection and analysis

While civic education is most commonly a part of social studies or history, it can be incorporated in all service projects and through all curriculum areas. (For more information on civic education, go to the civic education links in the Tools and Resources section of this guide, the CD-ROM that accompanies it, or at www.usafreedomcorps.gov)

char·ac·ter \'kar-ik-tər\ *n*: reputation, moral excellence and strength.

BENEFITS OF STUDENT SERVICE AND SERVICE-LEARNING

Although still in the early stages, studies suggests that schools with well-designed service and service-learning programs can provide a number of benefits for students, teachers, schools, after-school programs, and communities. These benefits, which have emerged from existing studies, deserve to be followed up with more rigorous research.

In 2000, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, a long-time supporter of service-learning, appointed a National Commission on Service-Learning. The Commission, cosponsored by the John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy and chaired by former U.S. Senator John Glenn, spent a year studying the state of service-learning in the Nation's schools. The commission consisted of 18 education, government and community leaders. The commission's findings are included below. The findings took account of a study of K-12 school-based programs conducted between 1994 and 1997 to evaluate Learn and Serve America's service-learning programs and also included other program experience. For more details from the Commission's report, go to www.learningindeed.org/slcommission. A summary of the Learn and Serve America report can be found at www.learnandserve.org/research.

The following is a summary of the Commission findings and other studies on potential service-learning effects:

- Increased student engagement

  Students who participate in high quality service-learning programs can become more active learners. Service-learning allows students to make the critical connection between the knowledge they are acquiring in the classroom and its use in the real world. Through service-learning, students are taught to think critically, make key decisions, interact with others, and provide service that makes a difference both to themselves and the community. As a result, their school attendance and motivation to learn can increase.

- Improved academic achievement

  When teachers explicitly tie service activities to academic standards and learning objectives, students can show gains on measures of academic achievement, including standardized tests. Service-learning that includes environmental activities, for example, can help students apply math skills (e.g., measurement and problem solving) and science skills (e.g. prediction and knowledge of botany), if they are explicitly woven into the experience.

- Improved thinking skills

  Service-learning helps students improve their ability to analyze complex tasks, draw inferences from data, solve new problems, and make decisions. The degree to which improvements occur in these "higher order thinking skills" can depend on how well teachers get students to talk about and understand the service activities they are performing.

- Improved character

  Service-learning promotes responsibility, trustworthiness, and caring for others. Through service projects, students can learn not to let each other down or to disappoint those being served. Young people who participate in service-learning are the students who acquire an ethic of service, volunteer more frequently, and say they plan to continue to volunteer as they get older.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

Character education helps young people to know, care about, and act upon core ethical values such as fairness, honesty, compassion, responsibility, and respect for self and others. While parents and other family members have the primary responsibility for nurturing their children's character, schools, religious institutions, and community-based youth service programs can support and emphasize values through character education. Character education can be provided in a variety of ways, including civics classes that emphasize constitutional principles and the responsibilities of citizenship; school wide projects on ethics and character; student government; and other extracurricular activities. Volunteer service is a frequent feature of character education programs. It helps young people to practice the values of compassion, caring, cooperation, responsibility and citizenship through meaningful service to others in the community. For more information on character education, go to the character education links in the Tools and Resources section of this guide, the CD-ROM that accompanies it, or at www.usafreedomcorps.gov.

⇢ Improved social behavior

Young people who are active in service programs are less likely to engage in risky behaviors. For many young people, service-learning provides a venue in which they can be more successful than they have been in more traditional classroom settings. Service and service-learning can also reinforce the kinds of social behaviors that are crucial for success in the workforce.

⇢ Stronger ties to schools, communities, and society

Service-learning can give students a sense of belonging to and responsibility for their communities. For example, through service projects, young people often come to believe that they can make a difference in their schools, communities, and society. Some studies have established a strong connection between this sense of "efficacy" and academic achievement, as well as greater concern for personal health and well-being.

⇢ Exposure to new careers

Through service-learning, many students come into contact with adults in careers that would otherwise remain hidden to them. For example, students may meet social workers, scientists, park rangers, government workers, health workers, and others who work in community agencies. By assisting them and seeing how schoolwork relates to what they do, students can acquire higher or more varied career or job aspirations, along with a more realistic understanding of what is necessary to attain them.

⇢ Positive school environments

Where service-learning is practiced school-wide, program experience shows that teachers can feel reinvigorated, dialogue on teaching and learning can be stimulated, and the school climate can improve. In fact, many teachers become advocates for incorporating more service into the curriculum. Service programs have also been associated with reduced negative student behaviors and disciplinary referrals, as well as dropout rates.

⇢ Stronger community groups

When young people form early connections with community groups through service activities, the groups themselves are often the beneficiaries. Young people can infuse a charity or civic group with energy and inspiration; become members of the volunteer force, staff, or board; help build awareness of the group's mission throughout the community; and help an organization garner positive press and media attention.

⇢ Increased community support for schools

Community members who work with the young people engaged in service activities frequently say they come to view youth differently, seeing them as assets who contribute to the community in positive ways. Public support for schools can grow as a result of student involvement in community activities.

The benefits described here do not come about without careful attention to the design and implementation of service and service-learning projects. In particular, teachers, principals, and community group leaders must tie the service to particular educational goals and learning standards; facilitate discussion of and reflection on the service and civic principles involved; and give students real choices in the planning, implementation, and assessment of the projects.

LEARN AND SERVE AMERICA

Learn and Serve America is a program of the federal Corporation for National and Community Service. Established in 1993, Learn and Serve America's goal is to provide young people with opportunities to serve America through service-learning. The program supports the creation or expansion of service and service-learning programs in schools, community-based organizations, and higher education. It also works to enhance the quality of those programs and link practitioners in the field to resources to help improve their practice.

Learn and Serve America provides training and technical assistance to its grantees and the public through the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse and the National Service-Learning Training and Technical Assistance Program. It supports studies of service-learning and works with other educational organizations to increase awareness of the value of service-learning and demonstrate how it complements other educational reform efforts. Its network of grantees at the state and local levels are linked together so they can share ideas and curricula and provide feedback and solutions to issues they face in their programs. Its web site can be found at www.learnandserve.org.

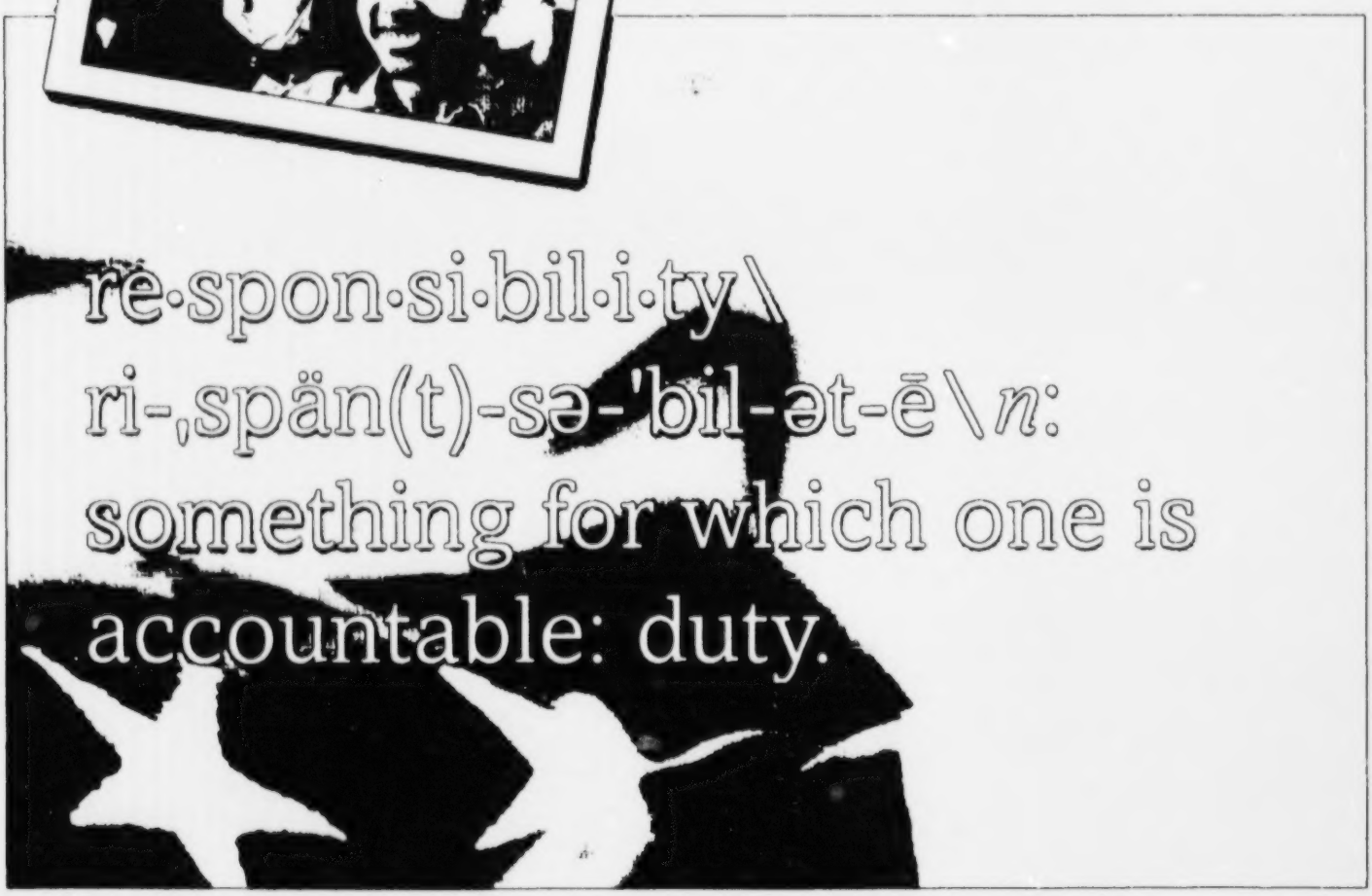
EXAMPLES OF SERVICE-LEARNING IN ACTION

Service-learning programs can take many forms. They may take place during the school day, after school, on weekends, and/or during the summer. They may involve a single class or youth group, several classes, the whole school, or an entire school district. In Ohio, service-learning is organized on a statewide level.

What most of these programs have in common is that they began with one good idea and grew to become complex projects involving many people. The following are some examples of school-based and community-based programs that demonstrate the diversity of service-learning programs and projects. The CD-ROM that accompanies this guide and www.servicelearning.org offer additional examples of service-learning.

SERVICE-LEARNING IN ONE CLASS

Sixth grade students in one classroom began a program designed to teach active citizenship and participatory skills by polling classmates, family, and neighbors about problems in their community that could be corrected with public policy. The group decided to improve a two-lane road shared by cars, trucks, walkers, skaters, and bikers.



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Students measured the road, conducted traffic surveys, questioned drivers and pedestrians, and photographed problem areas. Finally, they proposed a pedestrian bridge and path. They designed a path with a highway engineer, prepared testimony and documentation, and appeared before a meeting of county commissioners to present their plan and request materials and equipment. The students pledged to raise the necessary $4,500. The county commissioners voted unanimously to authorize the construction of a gravel path.

Not satisfied with gravel, the students approached a construction company that agreed to donate and install asphalt. Construction was completed with the help of the Conservation Corps, and the path was dedicated in less than a year from its conception on November 1, 2001.

SERVICE-LEARNING ORGANIZED BY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS IN AFTER-SCHOOL HOURS

Middle school students working with their local YMCA shop for and deliver groceries to homebound seniors twice a month through a program called the Grocery Connection. The project builds consistent relationships between seniors and young people. Youth in the program examine issues related to health and nutrition, as well as the economics and processes of agriculture and food production. The program expanded to include a partnership with a local school in which teachers incorporate service-learning activities that focus on food and nutrition into a variety of subjects, including geography.

WHOLE SCHOOL OR DISTRICT-WIDE SERVICE-LEARNING

One school district has been honored for its efforts to link service, character development, and civic education across all schools and grade levels. Every teacher in the district involves students in service and service-learning.

Many of the district's schools have been given special recognition, including one program featured below. Other programs in the district involve first graders in an ongoing reciprocal relationship with a local senior center that involves tutoring and reading, and fourth graders in adopting and preserving local wetlands as a part of a yearlong science curriculum.

At one district high school, service-learning and civics education are strongly interconnected. For example, every freshman takes an integrated civics-English course that engages students in actively exploring the question: "What are the rights and responsibilities of a citizen in a just society?" The English and civics components meet on alternating days in an extended block over an entire year. In English, the themes discussed in civics are explored through literature. For the first half of the year, civics students study the structure of and rationale behind our democratic system of government. During the second half, they study the conditions that gave rise to dictatorship in Germany and, eventually, the Holocaust. The juxtaposition of these themes allows students to weigh the benefits of our system of government, recognizing the value of individual freedom and limited government. At the same time, students recognize that these values are never guaranteed, that a just society can "easily be lost, but never fully won." Democracy, the students learn, is an

ongoing struggle, kept alive and vital by an active and informed citizenry that recognizes the rights of others and is empowered to effect change.

For the service component of the course, every ninth grade student develops his own community service-learning project. In the fall, while studying national, state, and local government, students identify various community needs and consider the extent to which these levels of government effectively address these needs. Students are encouraged to focus on one need that matters to them. In the winter, they design a project that will address this need. In the spring, they carry out their project.

The projects that the students develop are varied, but they all have connections to their course work. Students who developed an arts awareness dance performance for elementary students partnered with elementary principals and teachers as well as the local Arts Alliance. Others planted flowers and cleaned up around an elementary school, partnering with the building principal and grounds keeper. Students who organized a canned-food drive joined forces with both the local food pantry and a supermarket, where they held the drive. The teacher keeps track of these relationships so that the following years' classes can use and build upon the networks that have been created.

STATEWIDE SERVICE-LEARNING

While every state has many service-learning programs, and most states have strong statewide networks of service-learning schools, teachers, and students, only one state has developed a project designed to link together the entire state in a common goal—the Ohio Bicentennial Service-Learning Schools Project. In 2003, Ohio will be celebrating its bicentennial, and the Ohio Bicentennial Service-Learning Schools Project will offer Ohio students the opportunity to participate actively in the creation of a bicentennial legacy. The Project expects to enlist one middle and/or high school in each of Ohio's 88 counties, designating them "Ohio Bicentennial Service-Learning Schools."

The project engages students in three service-learning activities tied to the school's current course materials and objectives:

PRESERVING THE PAST: Students will perform research and interviews to arrive at a characterization of their county and community. Each school's work will be collected into a historical account of Ohio written by its school children, which will be presented to the Ohio State Legislature.

ENRICHING THE PRESENT: Students will partner with others to conduct a countywide needs assessment to explore and identify a local need. Then project partners will design and implement a project to address the targeted issue.

SHAPING THE FUTURE: Students will create a service-learning project designed to enhance their county's future.

Tools and Resources

Listed below are tools and resources that may assist you in designing and implementing service and service-learning programs. Those listed here are available on the Internet. They are organized according to key topics that represent some of the major components of service activities.

The list is not exhaustive, but is a sample of useful and readily available materials that will lead you to additional resources according to your needs and interests. While we include a sample of many prominent organizations operating nationwide, there are also a number of other organizations and religious denominations that sponsor youth-service programs. Many of the sites listed contain valuable service and service-learning resources far beyond the category in which they are listed.

IN SCHOOLS

GETTING STARTED/TOOLKITS

Getting started may seem like a daunting task, but there are several resources to assist you in your efforts, as well as toolkits to help you from start to finish.

COMPACT FOR LEARNING AND CITIZENSHIP: This nationwide coalition of chief state school officers, district superintendents, and others committed to service-learning in K-12 classrooms gathers and disseminates information, provides training and technical assistance, builds partnerships and networks, and serves as a national voice for creating high-quality service-learning opportunities for all students. The site has links to various issue areas, meetings, and publications.
Link: www.ecs.org/clc

NATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL: The NYLC Essential Elements Publication site serves as a clearinghouse of information for service-learning, including news, events, online resources, and descriptions of publications. The Essential Elements Publications is a fee-based product that provides examples of programs from novice to expert. Link: www.nylc.org/publications.cfm

NORTHWEST REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY: This service-learning toolbox provides information to help start your program and keep it going. It offers information in a narrative format along with work pages and checklists that help you personalize the information on starting and maintaining a program. The document is divided into four key areas: preparation (project identification and planning), action, formal evaluation, and online resources.
Link: www.nwrel.org/ruraled/learnserve/resources/SL_Toolbox.pdf

PEACE CORPS, PAUL D. COVERDELL WORLD WISE SCHOOLS: This model provides valuable background information needed to start a service-learning program. Subject areas include: a definition of service-learning; standards and framework; getting started; project ideas; and lesson plans. It also provides links to other service-learning web sites and information on other resources.
Link: www.peacecorps.gov/wws/service/getstarted/slmodel.html

This document contains contact addresses and web sites for information created and maintained by other public and private organizations. The collaborators do not control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of this outside information. The inclusion of information, addresses or web sites is not intended to endorse any views expressed, or products or services offered.

POWER OF FIVE: Developed by America's Promise and Weekly Reader, Power of Five is a turnkey service-learning tool for classroom educators and small group leaders to use in engaging 11-14 year olds in service around the five critical needs of other children and youth, called the Five Promises. Link: www.poweroffive.org

THE NATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING CLEARINGHOUSE: Among the clearinghouse resources is a compilation of funding sources, including government organizations, non-profit organizations, foundations, and businesses. Link: www.servicelearning.org

THE NATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING PARTNERSHIP: The Partnership is a national membership organization bringing together practitioners, administrators, policy-makers, researchers, community leaders, parents and young people to support K-12 service-learning. Link: www.service-learningpartnership.org

FINDING HELP

Many organizations may offer funding resources as well as personnel resources such as a service-learning or volunteer coordinator who can connect you with other community resources, and recruit and manage volunteers. The links below will help you find these kinds of support.

AMERICORPS: A program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, AmeriCorps is a network of national service programs that engages more than 50,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. Many AmeriCorps members are assigned to serve in schools and can be used as coordinators. This link leads to an online index of AmeriCorps programs throughout the United States. You should contact AmeriCorps program sponsors to see if any members would be available to help. Link: www.americorps.org

LEARN AND SERVE AMERICA: This is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, providing funding and training support for service-learning programs in schools, community-based organizations, and higher education institutions. Nearly every State Education Agency (SEA) operates a Learn and Serve America program that makes funds available to local schools and their service-learning partners and provides training and technical assistance. The SEA Learn and Serve America representative has expertise in service-learning across the state. In addition, Learn and Serve America makes competitive grants to national nonprofit organizations, higher education institutions and associations, tribes, U.S. territories, and state commissions on national and community service.
Link: www.learnandserve.org

POINTS OF LIGHT FOUNDATION AND THE VOLUNTEER CENTER NATIONAL NETWORK: The Foundation is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization devoted to promoting volunteerism whose mission is to engage more people more effectively in volunteer service to help solve serious social problems. The Foundation works closely with the Volunteer Center National Network. These organizations, which are found in over 500 communities, match volunteers with community groups seeking help. This link leads to an index of the National Network of Volunteer Centers.
Link: www.pointsoflight.org

RECORD OF SERVICE

The USA Freedom Corps offers a reflection tool that may be helpful in your classroom. A Record of Service journal that includes facts and figures on volunteer service as well as inspirational quotes from historical figures, philosophers, authors, poets and others can be downloaded at www.usafreedomcorps.gov or ordered from the USA Freedom Corps. If your students have Internet access in the classroom, you may want to use the online Record of Service available on the USA Freedom Corps web site.

THE NATIONAL SENIOR SERVICE CORPS: This network of three major programs (Foster Grandparents, Senior Companion, and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) is based at the Corporation for National and Community Service and engages more than 500,000 volunteers aged 55 and over in service to meet critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. Many members work in schools and can be used as coordinators. This link offers an index to Senior Service Corps programs throughout the United States. Contact local Senior Service Corps sponsors to see if any members would be available to help.
Link: www.seniorcorps.org

THE STATE EDUCATION AGENCY K-12 SERVICE-LEARNING NETWORK: This site has information on policy development, best practices, resources, and a map that links to all the individual state departments of education homepages.
Link: www.seanetonline.org

YOUTH SERVICE AMERICA: Youth Service America is a resource center and alliance of over 300 organizations committed to increasing the quantity and quality of opportunities for young Americans to serve locally, nationally, or globally. The site offers a listing of funding sources and access to the full text of the funding opportunities. Link: www.ysa.org

com·pas·sion\kəm-'pash-ən*n*: concern for the suffering of another: with the inclination to give aid or support.

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CURRICULUM

Many curricular resources exist to help you link service with learning. Many states have also published guides to linking service-learning with your curricular standards. Contact your Learn and Serve America state education agency representative (www.seanetonline.org) for more information.

CELEBRATION USA: This nonprofit educational organization was established in 1992 to encourage young people to honor the principles of democracy, good citizenship, and patriotism. It is a sponsor of Pledge Across America. Link: www.celebrationusa.org

LEARNING IN DEED: This site is primarily a catalog of links for K-12 service-learning curricula. Link: www.learningindeed.org/tools/other/curmet.html

PROGRAM DIRECTORIES AND MODELS

Examples of existing programs, model programs and best practices are available on several web sites, including the following.

LEARN AND SERVE AMERICA GRANTEE PROGRAM DIRECTORY: At this site you can search for service-learning programs and descriptions by geographical location (city and state), type of program (higher education, K-12, community-based, etc.), location (rural, suburban, and urban), school subject area, and community services. Link: www.servicelearning.org/resources_tools/program_directory/index.php

THE NATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING LEADER SCHOOLS: This national initiative recognizes schools for their excellence in service-learning on the basis of their exemplary integration of service-learning into the curriculum and the life of the school. Link: www.leaderschools.org

CIVIC AND CHARACTER EDUCATION LINKAGES

Among the academic subjects that help students develop responsibility are character and civic education. The following is a list of organizations that offer civic education or character education resources to educators. More information on these and other organizations can be found on the CD-ROM that accompanies the guide or on-line at www.usafreedomcorps.gov.

CIVIC EDUCATION

BILL OF RIGHTS INSTITUTE: Link: www.billofrightsinstitute.org

CELEBRATION USA: Link: www.celebrationusa.org

CENTER FOR CIVIC EDUCATION: Link: www.civiced.org

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION:
Link: www.crf-usa.org/lessons.html

CHARACTER EDUCATION

COLLABORATIVE FOR ACADEMIC, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING: Link: www.casel.org

GOODCHARACTER.COM: Link: www.GoodCharacter.com

THE CENTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ETHICS AND CHARACTER: Link: www.bu.edu/education/caec

THE CHARACTER COUNTS! COALITION: Link: www.charactercounts.org

THE CHARACTER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP: Link: www.character.org

OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Service and service-learning programs can go on outside the school too. To be effective, however, they need to be well-organized and meaningful, and connected as closely as possible to what young people are expected to learn.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Several national organizations have programs and affiliates that work with youth. The organizations listed here work primarily in service-learning and youth development. More information on these organizations and others can be found on the CD-ROM that accompanies the guide or on-line at www.usafreedomcorps.gov.

AMERICA'S PROMISE: Link: www.americaspromise.org

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT ACTIVITY ADVISERS: Link: www.principals.org

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT COUNCILS (NASC): Link: www.dsa.principals.org/nasc

NATIONAL PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION: Link: www.pta.org/index.asp

NATIONAL SERVICE RESOURCE CENTER: Link: www.etr.org/NSRC/

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

After school is an ideal time to engage young people in service and service-learning. Activities may be linked directly to school-day content, or to academic, civic, social, and recreational enrichment activities.

21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS (CCLC): The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program is a component of President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act. These centers provide opportunities for students and their families to continue to learn new skills and discover new abilities after the school day has ended. Link: www.ed.gov/21stcclc

AFTERSCHOOL.GOV: A vast list of federal resources and ideas for after-school programs is available at this web site, including ways to plan, support, and conduct programs; community and organizational linkages; and how to keep current through the use of clearinghouses, government programs, listservs, newsletters, publications, research, and reports. There is also a related site for younger students and teenagers. Link: www.afterschool.gov

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON OUT OF SCHOOL TIME: You will find an issue brief on service-learning after school that focuses on specific ways of inspiring youth to learn, connecting to school-day academies, fostering civic duty, and maximizing volunteers and community resources. Link: www.etr.org/nsrc/pdfs/niost/IssueBrief9.pdf

THE AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE: This nonprofit organization is dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of after-school programs and advocating for quality, affordable programs for all children. The web site includes news, events, research and resources related to after-school programs.
Link: www.afterschoolalliance.org

SERVICE CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Many nonprofit groups sponsor chapters and programs for young people, especially in high school and middle school. Their activities often include community service. The following is a list of some of the better-known ones, whose programs feature both regular service and service-learning.

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AMERICAN RED CROSS: The Youth Office works to help students enhance self-reliance, develop concern for others, and make commitments to community service. Program themes include Volunteer Service, Leadership Development, Youth/Adult Partnerships, School-Based Partnerships, and International Awareness. Link: www.redcross.org/services/youth/edu/index.html

CAMP FIRE USA: Camp Fire USA is one of the Nation's leading nonprofit youth development organizations, serving over 650,000 participants annually. Camp Fire USA provides all-inclusive, coeducational programs in hundreds of communities across the United States. Founded in 1910, Camp Fire USA's outcome-based programs include youth leadership, self-reliance, after-school groups, camping and environmental education, and child care. Link: www.campfire.org

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY: Habitat for Humanity's campus chapters are unincorporated, student-run, student-led organizations that perform three main functions: building or rehabilitating houses in partnership with Habitat affiliates, national offices and homeowners; educating the campus and community about affordable housing issues and the work of Habitat for Humanity; and raising funds for the work of Habitat. Link: www.habitat.org/ccyp

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT: Beginning at the elementary school level, Junior Achievement reaches approximately 5.2 million students worldwide. Through age-appropriate curricula, Junior Achievement programs teach children how they can impact the world around them as individuals, workers and consumers. Programs use a mixture of classroom instruction and student-run projects aimed at applying economic and business principles to real-world issues. Link: www.ja.org

KEY CLUB (KIWANIS EDUCATING YOUTH): Key Club is a coeducational service organization for high school students, organized and sponsored by local Kiwanis clubs. A self-governing organization, it elects its own officers, determines its own service activities, and establishes its own dues structure. Some objectives include: developing initiative and leadership; serving the school and community; and developing a more intelligent, aggressive and serviceable citizenship.
Link: www.keyclub.org/index.htm

NATIONAL 4-H COUNCIL: 4-H is a youth development program administered through the Land Grant college system. It promotes "Learning by Doing" and the development of youth leadership skills for the future. National 4-H Council is the national, private sector nonprofit partner of the 4-H chapters and the Cooperative Extension System. It works with 4-H clubs at all levels—national, state and local—providing training and support, fostering innovative programming, and facilitating meetings and connections within the 4-H partnership. It uses service-learning in a growing number of its activities with young people. Link: www.fourhcouncil.edu

NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR TEACHING ENTREPRENEURSHIP: NFTE's mission is to teach entrepreneurship to low-income young people, ages 11 through 18, so that they can learn more about becoming productive members of society by improving their academic, business, technology and life skills. NFTE programs are offered in a variety of settings, including public schools, after-school programs at community-based organizations, and intensive summer business camps. Link: www.nfte.com

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY: The National Honor Society (NHS) and National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) recognize outstanding high school and middle level students. More than just an academic honor roll, NHS and NJHS honor those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of leadership, service, and character (and citizenship for NJHS). School-based chapters often sponsor tutoring and other service activities. Link: http://dsa.principals.org/nhs

STUDENTS AGAINST DESTRUCTIVE DECISIONS: Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) is a youth organization that promotes teen empowerment and uses peer influence to spread the message of positive decision-making. The SADD organization is comprised of thousands of high school and middle school chapters that embrace a "No Use" policy and help educate other students about potentially destructive decisions regarding underage drinking, impaired driving, drug use, violence and suicide.
Link: www.saddonline.com

YOUTH LEADERSHIP CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS
A variety of organizations seek to develop civic leadership skills in young people. Their programs involve having students learn about how government or community groups work, then having them role-play or take part in their activities. Participants often take part in service projects or are chosen on the basis of records of service.

BOYS AND GIRLS STATE (AMERICAN LEGION/AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY): The American Legion Boys State and American Legion Auxiliary Girls State are selective educational programs of government instruction for high school students. Each participant becomes a part of the operation of his local, county and state government. Activities include legislative sessions, court proceedings, law enforcement presentations, assemblies, bands, chorus and recreational programs. Link: www.legion.org/events/evt_bs.htm Link: www.legion-aux.org

HUGH O'BRIAN YOUTH LEADERSHIP: This program enrolls outstanding high school sophomores who meet with recognized leaders in business, government, science, education, and the professions. Seminars take place at the community, state, and international levels. Participants are expected to provide at least one hundred hours of service. Link: www.hoby.org

JUNIOR STATE OF AMERICA: Through school-based chapters, regional conferences, and academic summer programs, this student-run organization helps youth learn how to actively participate in public affairs. Link: www.jsa.org

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Model United Nations is an authentic simulation of the U.N. General Assembly and other multilateral bodies, catapulting students into the world of diplomacy and negotiation. Participants have to learn about international issues and then work with other "delegations" to try to solve them. Link: www.unausa.org

YMCA TEEN LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS (YOUTH AND GOVERNMENT): YMCA programs help teens learn how to express themselves, come together for a common cause, and be active and informed citizens. Leaders Clubs involve teens in community service projects, and the Youth and Government program involves students in hands-on activities that teach them about state government. High school youth participate in model state legislatures and the annual Youth Governors Conference held in Washington, D.C. each summer. Link: www.ymca.net/programs/teens/Teens.htm

RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

Service is often its own reward, as is learning. But both are more likely to take place when students are recognized publicly for their efforts. A number of programs aim to do exactly that.

CONGRESSIONAL AWARD: This award program of the U.S. Congress is open to all 14- to 23-year-olds. Participants earn Bronze, Silver and Gold Congressional Award Certificates and Bronze, Silver and Gold Congressional Award Medals. Attaining each level involves setting goals in four program areas: Volunteer Public Service, Personal Development, Physical Fitness, and Expedition/Exploration.
Link: www.congressionalaward.org

DAILY POINT OF LIGHT AWARD: Designed to honor those who have made a commitment to connecting Americans through service to help meet critical needs in their communities, these awards are given daily by the Points of Light Foundation and the Volunteer Center National Network.
Link: www.pointsoflight.org/dpol/ ProgramInfo.htm

THE NATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING LEADER SCHOOLS: This is a national initiative, sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service, that annually recognizes junior and senior high schools for their excellence in service-learning. These schools are chosen competitively, based on their integration of service-learning into the curriculum and life of the school.
Link: www.leaderschools.org

THE PRESIDENT'S STUDENT SERVICE AWARD: All full-time students from kindergarten through college who contribute at least 100 hours (50 hours for younger students) of service to the community are eligible for the award. Students may be certified by their school, college or a community organization.
Link: www.student-service-awards.org/awards_index.htm

THE PRESIDENTIAL FREEDOM SCHOLARSHIPS: Each high school in the country may select up to two students to receive a $1,000 scholarship in recognition of their outstanding leadership in service to the community. The students selected may be either high school juniors or seniors. The Corporation for National and Community Service provides $500 for each scholarship, which must be matched with $500 secured by the school from a local service club, business or other organization. Link: www.nationalservice.org/scholarships

THE PRUDENTIAL SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY AWARDS: Sponsored by Prudential Financial Services, these awards recognize middle level and high school students who have demonstrated exemplary, self-initiated community service. Schools may select one honoree for every 1,000 students. Students are recognized at the local, state, and national levels. Link: www.prudential.com/community

Conclusion

To meet the challenges our Nation faces, our youth must be well-educated and engaged citizens. Many of our young people already participate in volunteer service, and should be recognized for following in the tradition of generations of Americans who have served their neighbors and their Nation. But there are more needs to be met, and more young people who have the talents and abilities to help meet those needs.

The President issued his Call to Service to all Americans. As you use this guide to help American students answer that Call to Service, you will be helping our young people develop habits of service that will meet important needs in your community. You will also be helping them develop characteristics of responsibility and citizenship and connecting them to the basic principles and traditions of our democracy.

In addition to the materials in this guide, you will find resources to help you create service and service-learning opportunities for young people on the CD-ROM enclosed and online at www.usafreedomcorps.gov, where you will also find the USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network. The USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network is the most comprehensive clearinghouse of volunteer service opportunities available. You or your students can enter geographic information, such as state or zip code, and areas of interest ranging from education to the environment, to access volunteer service opportunities offered by a range of partner organizations across the country. Together, these materials will help you plan student service opportunities and engage young people in their communities.

With your help, this generation will fulfill great challenges and strengthen our Nation through a lifetime of service.

The *Students in Service to America* guidebook and CD-ROM were developed through a collaboration of the Corporation for National and Community Service, the U.S. Department of Education and the Points of Light Foundation and the Volunteer Center National Network with the USA Freedom Corps.

Corporation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE

www.nationalservice.org

www.ed.gov

POINTS OF LIGHT FOUNDATION & VOLUNTEER CENTER NATIONAL NETWORK

www.pointsoflight.org

USA Freedom Corps
The President's Call to Service

www.usafreedomcorps.gov

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